

Egoism Vol. I. No. 12.

Georgia & Henry Replogle

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Contents

Pointers.	3
One Year Old.	6
Co-operative Schemes.	8
The Philosophy of Egoism.	11
IX.	11
Wakemanized Science.	13
Will it be Only a Change of Superstitions.	16
Mr. Pentecost Strikes Bottom.	17
Managerial Experience.	19
EGOISM'S PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE.	22

Pointers.

Although EGOISM was properly due on the first of each month it has seldom been out before the middle. The coming year it will not be due until the fifteenth.

We acknowledge the receipt of 50 cents from Prof. J. H. Cook for the funeral fund of J. W. Cooper, mentioned in the preceding number of this paper. This is the only response to that appeal. Surer the poor are the lone friends of the poor.

In "Liberty" of April 4, Victor Yarros in correcting Bellamy, favors its readers with an imaginary conversation between a Nationalist and an Evolutionist which subtly exposes in easily comprehended language the vague generalizing and erroneous conclusions of these socialistic amateurs. Nationalists should read the article, and permit themselves no longer to be exposed to the ridicule of more patient thinkers.

Alfred B. Westrup has published a new edition of "Citizens' Money" with an appendix consisting of the "Mutual Bank Propaganda: Its Declaration of Principles and Object." This makes it more desirable than our edition. It is neat and well-printed, contains 27 large pages and sells for 10 cents. We hope this edition of the excellent pamphlet will not be left on Mr. Westrup's hands, as much of our edition has on ours. Pamphlets can do no work so long as they remain on the publisher's shelves. Address The Mutual Bank Propaganda, 343 Michigan Ave. Chicago, Ills., or this paper.

The advertisement of "Fair Play" on the seventh page of this number is dead. That paper has suspended publication. Its publishers state that it has never received more than fifty per cent of the amount required to publish it. Aside from all considerations of sympathy for its publishers as friends having to abandon it, we are very sorry to see "Fair Play" stop. Being partly devoted to anti-theological propaganda and circulating among that class of innovators, it was enabled to carry Anarchistic ideas into places where exclusively Anarchistic papers never go. Its unexpired subscriptions will be filled by "Liberty," of Boston. Its editor has also joined that paper's staff and takes the field in the West as traveling salesman for it and Mr. Tucker's other publications.

The uncle of his nephew George Macdonald, has just translated and published Zola's latest novel, "Money," and says concerning it: "So boundless is my admiration for Zola and his works that I cannot bring myself to write soberly on the subject. For this reason I have asked Mr. Yarros, who is not yet as crazy as I am in this direction, to Write an article for the next number on Zola's latest novel, "Money," which I have just translated and published. Meantime I congratulate myself upon my self-control in confining myself to the moderate remark that "Money" is perhaps the greatest novel yet written by the greatest novelist that has yet lived." We are reading it and do not wonder at the enthusiasm of a person even so cool as Mr. Tucker usually is. When we have finished it more of our impressions will be given the habitually indifferent reader. Those who have faith in Mr. Tucker's judgment, and a dollar, will immediately send the latter to his address, Box 3366, Boston, and get a copy in cloth, or 50 cents of it for one in paper cover.

The case of the New Orleans massacre furnishes another illustration of the weakness and indifference of government in protecting life and securing justice. In the first place it allowed

the prisoners, unarmed and defenseless, to be butchered by a crazy mob, and now dares not or cares not to bring it to trial as it would a helpless individual, if indeed it does so at all. The "investigation" will be a covering up and an apologizing expedition for the community instead of an attempt to find and dispose of the invaders and repair as far as possible the loss of the sufferers from this cyclone of Grundy rage. If the victims had been the subjects of some of the stronger powers it would have been different too. The treasury would have been plunged into with large scoops, and the leaders of the mob put through a trial of some kind at least. But in this case there is no danger of punishment, and no refusal to render boodle to the State, so why should the political priests trouble themselves. Let New Orleans refuse to pay taxes or to obey any plunder gathering law, and if the standing army and the militia were not sufficient to bring her to time every laborer in the United States would be put into service for that purpose. But a few Italians shot and hanged without trial by "leading citizens" calls of course only for a formal investigation.

We have so often adversely criticised Hugh O. Pentecost that we are very glad for an opportunity to commend some of his utterances. These composed the principal part of his address on "Selfishness," delivered on Sunday March 29. This is in our estimation his ablest and most important effort. It was so radical and strong that J. W. S., whom we understand is his partner, deemed it necessary to apologize to the readers of the "Twentieth Century" by assuring them that Mr. Pentecost is not so bad as he would be willing for others to be if they liked. This apologist also attempts to refute Mr. Pentecost's position. He deduces from the fact that man can adapt means to ends more successfully than dogs can, the basis of a "right law" which embraces monogamy, the family, the State, morality, immortality, and God. And we deduce from such drivel, that J. W. S. is an old granny. That government, monogamy, morality, immortality, and God are all off the same cloth is obvious, but they are in no way supported by the fact that superior intelligence adapts means to pleasurable ends more successfully than inferior intelligence. This metaphysical acrobat confesses that arguing on this subject is not his forte, a statement which W. S. Bell declared to be the only correct one in the whole article. All this reveals acres of reactionary environment for Mr. Pentecost, and goes far toward accounting for the incoherence of his position taken as a whole.

In the face of equal resistance our civilization boasts of its refinement, but to the discriminating eye it betrays its barbarous brutality at every turn in which it is not met by such resistance. Right under our noses, while Americans hording gold in China and rich Chinese hording it here are protected, it is no uncommon thing to see a score of our citizens who assume heavily on their refinement, witnessing without rebuke, a dozen hoodlums or children pelting an inoffensive Chinese laborer with stones or mud as he passes along under a heavy load. He is helpless; successfully competing with the native slaves of a privilege-granting government, he is hated by them; and being only laboring material in the hands of either rich Chinamen or well-to-do Americans, they have no interest so long as he is not disabled and hard to replace; and being ignorant of how to proceed for redress before the courts and too poor to pay for it even if he knew how, he escapes each time as best he can. The same brutal indifference to invasive cruelty may be observed wherever helplessness is met by collective strength shielded by custom, as with the helpless minority, disfranchised woman, impoverished labor, a "fallen" woman, the lone heretic, and dumb beasts. It would seem that a continual array of such facts would attest the legitimacy of the claim that intelligent resistance and not preaching of "duty" and sacrifice is the remedy, but the subjective shell of the emotional clam closes too quickly to be affected by an object lesson.

When race experience shall have added to his sense of touch or feeling, that of sight with deliberate comparison, facts will have a leading part in determining conduct. Until he reaches that stage the mental mollusk must gap and close at each disturbance till he is sufficiently accustomed to them to remain open for an impression.

One Year Old.

EGOISM reaches with this number its first anniversary. Its influence has been greater than its publishers expected, though its management and editorial work fell very short of their ideal. It has usually been edited on the jump, writing and correcting against time. Even the first number had to be gotten out hastily, and appeared without a comprehensive and concise statement of its purpose. And its work is not yet as well systemized as it should have been at the start, but we mean to catch up with it sometime.

So far, such matters as happened to be thrust upon our notice were treated, while in the absence of systematic canvassing others of more importance have been overlooked. Henceforth we hope to remedy this.

During the past year we have promulgated the principle in a general way, but at the suggestion of Cornelia Boecklin, of Burlington, Iowa, we have concluded to apply it editorially more to local and Pacific coast affairs. This idea had occurred to us before, but was only superficially canvassed in that we rejected it on the grounds that such a course would destroy general interest and having no local support would be suicidal. But when Mrs. Boecklin described such a paper as the one she was looking for, it began to grow upon us how everybody is living in and necessarily connected with the doings of a community, and daily confronted with just such questions as such a paper would have to treat, so would be interested in it all the more for handling local subjects even though they were those of another place. Therefore we have decided to try that policy the coming year. We shall of course have to depend upon the daily press for notes, and as such news is likely to be doctored or the depredations of privilege not reported at all, it will be uphill work. If all our local friends would keep a little on the lookout for State invasions reports of which do not appear in the papers or are trimmed if they do, and send us a correct account of the facts they could thereby render the paper valuable service at little cost. In this way an efficient corps could be organized, resulting in great benefit both to its members and EGOISM's readers. Nothing could be better calculated than this to excite both local and general interest.

The contributed matter will necessarily and properly continue as in the past to apply the idea in a general way. The philosophy of Egoism, the principles of Anarchism, the discussion of the money question, of the sex question and kindred subjects will occupy their usual space. The paper will not, like some others, be a free-for-all born on any or no particular subject. Our purpose is to propagate the Egoistic idea as the eliminator of every kind of superstition and as the basis of equal freedom, and Anarchism as the scientific and only method of reaching such freedom. And such contributions as do not relate immediately to these questions either in extending or intelligently criticising them, cannot occupy space that costs us so much save as they are chosen from other considerations than keeping open house. Poems, stories, and relative selections such as we have been publishing, will be welcome and will receive as fast as practicable more and more space. We like poetry with thought and beauty combined, and fiction that teaches pleasure and provokes mirth or with utilitarian philosophy reduces bigotry to despair and chases, like a lizard into a rock pile, gushing emotionalism into its religious crevice in the theological ruin.

Be on the lookout, EGOISM will be commencing soon to be two-years old cattle, and when on sunny days the worm of the Egoistic gadfly begins to come through its skin it may kick very high and dash recklessly across coventionality's mossy lawn.

Co-operative Schemes.

Friends in writing to the publishers of this paper often refer to co-operation. Some with the unquestioning assurance common in speaking of happiness, liberty, or equality. Others noting the constant failures of co-operative attempts have plans by which they believe it can be “made to work.” These plans deviate from those of co-operative experiments, in an endeavor to secure individual freedom with combined industrial effort. They seem to realize to a certain extent that the question hinges on liberty, but persist in remaining on the wrong track to secure it. Liberty and communism mix only as oil and water mixes—each by itself. Liberty is a gratification, the imperative demand of a separate consciousness for unhampered action, while communism is an economical manipulation of material, a utility. Rock and mortar arranged in a wall is a success in combining materials. A thousand human bodies ground with lime would be an equal success in fertilizing land. But the thousand object; it makes a difference whether they be material for something else or something else for them. Conscious beings will not become material when they realize it. They do so without knowing it, but only for that reason. Indeed, the great effort of life it seems is to invent schemes to get people without knowing it to become material for the manipulators. It is the game of the church, the State, and of Moralism.

Consciousness chooses and choice implies purpose, a proposer and his pleasure. The idea of pleasure to be consistent with the function of choosing implies the greatest pleasure. If our intelligence were great enough to determine acts ideally consistent with the prerogative of choosing, there would be no suspensive breaks at all in pleasurable sensation. In the degree that our conduct is inconsistent with imperative Choice, in that degree we become material for something else, some element, combination, or person. If we absolutely refuse to become material for fertilizing land, because it deprives us forever of pleasure, then it is consistent to refuse as far as possible the role of material for a month or a moment because we are deprived of pleasure for that length of time. Limited intelligence struggling with environment for existence is of course obliged to break the most pleasurable sensation for various lengths of time; we cannot always gratify the imperative demand for unhampered action, but the rule of the least break holds good just the same.

We wish to avoid these breaks as much as possible, and co-operative schemes expose us to them the most that with equals is possible. It is their very nature to do so. Your impulse to be unhampered is necessarily opposed at every turn. You are not only as at present exposed to State plunder, and majority rule in some private and all public affairs, but in addition, this spinal monument of animal evolution thrusts its impudent nose into your every private affair. It is the basic law of collectivism to do so. Your labor, food, clothes, reading matter, conversation, recreation, and even sexual pleasures are regulated by its irresistible gore. In the work your cog must be there when the rest of the wheel revolves or there will be a jar with a social reaction. You cannot do less labor and live more frugally or use more of one thing and make up for it in less of an other at your own expense as in individual effort, for the whole unwieldy machine would be affected by such a more. You must eat such food as the majority, manipulated by ambitious

officers, decides is in the interest of the institution's success. Your clothes, reading matter, and recreation are subject to the same control for a similar reason. You must be careful what you say, for the institution holds your stored labor in a way that makes it hard to separate, and the officers can make it unpleasant for you if you did please them. And above all does the moral standing of a great institution require conformity to popular ideals in the expression of sex love. There is no privacy for kindred convictions on this subject there. The majority "knows what is right" and enforces it. It will not share labor with a "moral leper." It is like Ireland's Irish; any amount of oppression, but no unconventional departures in sexual association. Starvation, suffering and death are as nothing beside the horror of sexual caresses without the consent of the collective beast. In short, you have become material in the hands of ambitious chiefs. You are the fertilizer of an institution instead of the earth, and are in addition, at the disadvantage of being conscious of it, whereas in the former case you could perform the function with the indifference of oblivion. If your choosing faculty would not allow the role of fertilizer in oblivion, it must much less allow it in consciousness.

Besides protoplasmic ignorance and reptily meanness, there is a divergence of taste and capacities that is fatal to close association. One is fond of a kind of food the smell of which sickens another. One is boisterous, another loves quiet. One likes to declaim, sing, whistle, dance, and cat it in general about the house of evenings, while another desires to read or write matter of an intricate nature. Each should be allowed to enjoy himself undisturbed, but both cannot go on very near each other. One is careful of material and tools, and turns out good work; the other wastes material, wears out or breaks tools, and turns out work which if it passes at all lowers the grade of the goods in the market. The latter shares the benefit of the former's care while the first must help bear the effects of the other's incapacity. No official inspection and regulation costing a sum equal to or less than the difference between the respective products could adjust this. It requires an open market and free competition to give each his due. There is no dispute about quality when a free customer chooses between the two articles by paying cash for one and leaving the other.

I am well aware of how after having dragged wearily through a day's drudgery and the first ox tiredness has worn away a little we long for congenial companionship as we sit alone or among the chattering apes of religious and political superstition. I know well how the thoughts run to our ideal of the characters of the radical literature we read, and how it seems we must flash our avoirdupois across thousands of miles of deeded earth to warm our lonely consciousness in the soaking glow of their intellectual radiance, or feed our famishing nerves on their thrilling magnetism. I am acquainted not only with the lot of the single radical hermit, but with that of those others, the monogamy-environed pairs of social hermits who in a similar mood sit and gaze despairingly into each other's eyes conscious of their impotency to generate the faintest thrill on their magnetic dead sea. I am familiar with their disgust and bitter pessimism as they jostle amid multitudes of bursting-charged batteries of custom-insulated magnetism and note their cattish will and won't writhings. And it is not surprising that such hermits realizing that life is but once to live would speculate on gathering together kindred spirits and gladly abandoning the orthodox zoological garden. Furthermore the impulse is not erroneous, but usually misdirected. There is something in it, as I know by experience. Persons of similar ideas can make life not only more bearable but immeasurably happier by living in easy reach of each other, but not in that contempt breeding nearness necessary to co-operative schemes. It is not necessary in order to enjoy a charming woman's company to help her do her cooking and washing, nor for her

to help a man dig ditches or build houses to appreciate his social qualities. This indeed, would go far toward destroying such pleasure, for the very surroundings of vexation and weariness unconsciously become to our impressions a part of the unpleasantness.

When we come to analyze it we find it is the society under the most favorable circumstances, and not the physical labor of congenial people that we desire to share. The real ideal of the co-operation enthusiast is congenial companionship, a picnic attraction which he hopes to continue all the week, by working as well as playing together. But work is a matter of everyday compulsion, while picnicking is rare and voluntary at that. If we were compelled to associate in pleasure seeking as we should be in co-operative production we might not feel so slabberingly agreeable as we now imagine when in our isolation we dream fancies and forget facts.

So far as they can without sacrificing bread getting opportunities, it will pay radicals to seek social proximity, but if they leave material advantages which they cannot in a fair degree replace, in order to be in the company of other radicals they will soon have a job of kicking themselves to engage the leisure hours that are breeding starvation for them.

The superficial reasoning with which people usually content themselves in replying in their own minds to all these objections, is that the capitalistic system (which they term "competition") robs us of everything but the barest existence and that we cannot be sure of this much even; that cooperative effort is the only escape from this, and that we must get along with somebody and it might as well be those who hold at least some general principle in common with us. And it is true that we must get along with someone at labor, but it makes all the difference in the world in that getting along that we need not be responsible for their mismanagement; that we know that so far as they are concerned we can consume what little we get as we please. They cannot dictate what we shall eat, drink, and wear, nor all the pleasures of our recreation. And irked in production from the toll of privilege, these liberties which co-operationists are so willing to abandon, constitute much of the conditions necessary to the greatest happiness. But it is not true that cooperative effort in any sense different from that which would exist with free money added to present methods of production is necessary to escape the plundering of the capitalistic system. Free money would remove speculative interest, with which all capitalists would immediately seek to make their money help make a living by engaging in production, which in its turn making a greater demand for labor would raise wages. And then the competition between these capitalists in disposing of their products would lower the price to the laboring consumer. So between capital's bid for labor to employ it and its competition in selling its product to labor, the tendency would be ever nearing the point where labor would get the whole of its product, leaving capital merely intact and desirable only as a means to furnish its owner labor for his own hands first. Capital under free competition would be cheaper than in co-operation even, because it would drift toward the most skillful hands, the hands which could offer labor the greatest inducements.

There then we are delivered not only from the brutal slavery of capitalism, and the ignorant tyranny of communism, but the ineconomical unwieldiness of machine co-operation. This is a method of attaining industrial freedom, at once so simple, and a prospect so magnificent as must monopolize all the effort in that direction, of whoever will take the trouble to understand it.

H.

The Philosophy of Egoism.

IX.

If self-renunciation be a virtue, surely it is the purer when the sacrifice is made for individuals of another and widely different species. In caring for our own species we may obtain a return, and we can cherish the imagination thereof if it seems improbable; and so it is in caring for one of any other species between which and ourselves there is some communication of mutual intelligence and mutual sympathy; but if a man wants to show pure disinterestedness let him sacrifice his pleasure his comfort and his life for other species that will neither understand nor return the manifestation of benevolence. Such a supernal Altruist will reject cleanliness as a sin, if convinced, as he must be by ordinary observation, that parasites thrive best on the human body when there is an entire avoidance of soap and water. Such a self-denying Moralist will not dress a wound or purify his blood, for these practices mean death to animalcules. Here I am reminded of the story of the devout Hindoo who was horrified on looking at a drop of water through a powerful microscope. He found to his consternation that he could not drink without destroying life.

Supernal Moralism should be viewed sometimes from the point of view of universal animal motives and conduct, excluding the idea of selflessness. If the survival of the fittest be not an empty phrase, supernal Moralism is an excessively silly insanity. The "sacredness" of the germs of human is impressed upon the mind of the devotee of Moralism, and in some cases the result is that a child is born as the offspring of rape. The simple, pious people may wonder that "God" can assist in giving effect to crime. The supernal Moralist who prides himself on scientific acquirements may well feel confused when a hybrid form appears as a practical commentary upon the alleged "sacredness."

Spiritual terror, the strangest, most melancholy phenomenon in human motive. is essentially the same influence, while it lasts, in the man or woman claiming to be emancipated from theological dogmas, as in the believer in those dogmas. It usually remains after its generally supposed root is destroyed, in the Agnostic, like an air-plant. This indicates that its foundation is not precisely where some anti-theological writers suppose. Mere disbelief in Jehovah may leave the agnostic mind subject to fixed ideas of a most irrational character. The belief in Jehovah in the first place occupied an ignorant mind and when that belief is expelled neither ignorance nor fear is altogether banished. There is some improvement in the prospect for positive Egoistic thought and sentiment to occupy its own. There remain, however, numerous fixed ideas of Duty to Society, Duty to the State, Duty to Humanity and such rubbish, which are fertile of intoxicating and paralyzing influences, and our talking Freethinkers in general still shudder to contemplate a person uncontrolled by such "restraining influences." They imagine, after all, that he will go to the devil or run amuck without moral "restraint." The triumph of sanity, then, lies not in the expulsion of any one form of insanity, but in the acquisition of an Egoistic consciousness and self-control.

TAK KAK.

Wakemanized Science.

Under the heading, "Some Essentials that Mr. Pentecost Overlooks," Mr. Wakeman made a criticism upon his teachings and upon Anarchism in general. It is presumed that this subject was not taken at random, or without forethought, by Mr. Wakeman for the grounds of his address before the Liberal Club of New York. As he selected his own theme it is to be supposed that he had given it some attention. Many of his statements would imply that he thought so, but very little can be found in them to confirm the supposition.

It did not seem at all important to go into details in the discussion of this subject, as it was more to his mind and method to make affirmations and call them scientific. Some of his statements were known before science was such a common commodity. He accuses Mr. Pentecost of harboring unconcealed hunks of unwisdom, and to wake him up tee lively sense of his sinful and lost condition he opens a broad side upon him by informing him confidently that society is an "organism," and that if he had "but the slightest smattering of the science of sociology he would know that society is an organism, and human life an organic action, there fore subject to laws greater than the will of the individual." The reader who has not read Mr. Yarros's reply in "Liberty," and Tak Kak's in "Fair Play," to Mr. Wakeman, has missed a treat. These two writers have made it painfully evident that Mr. Wakeman's acquaintance with sociology is only the "slightest smattering." For there are somethings regarding sociology with which Mr. Wakeman cannot he said to be strictly familiar. (1) He did not know that Spencer does not maintain that society is an organism in the sense that an animal is an organism, and that he says that society has peculiarities which agree with individual organism, and that it has "on the other hand" "differences." (2) Mr. Wakeman's "smattering of the science of sociology" is so slight and diaphanous that he does not seem to know but that society and government are one and the same thing. I will notice this at length presently.

Mr. Wakeman asks, "What has Mr. Pentecost done? During the later years nothing but harm. He has placed himself outside of society and made war upon society." The confusion in Mr. Wakeman's mind arises from his obtuseness in not distinguishing between society and government. Mr. Pentecost has not gone outside of society. He could not do so if he wanted to unless he plunged into some immense forest, and there resolved to live and die. On the contrary, he lives in the very heart of civilization. He does not violate the laws of the land. Besides and above all he advocates the law of equal freedom.

This does not look like declaring war upon society. It is true he objects to brute force in government. He admits that under present conditions government is a necessary evil, but that by free and intelligent discussion the time will come when the people will discover that government is a despotism, a fetich, a superstition, and then it will be an unnecessary evil. Mr. Spencer says a propos,— "It is a mistake to assume that government must last forever." Again, he teaches that government is "essentially immoral"—that it is the individual's right to "ignore the State." And further he says, "Thus as civilization advances does government decay." From the London "Times" he approvingly quotes: "The social changes of our progress are determined rather by the

spontaneous workings of society, connected as they are with the progress of art and science, the operations of nature, and other unpolitical causes, than by the proposition of a bill, the passing of an act, or any other event of politics or of State.”

Thomas Paine was a manufacturer of governments, and his opinion on the subject is of great weight. He says: “A great part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It had its origin in the principles of society, and the natural constitution of man. It existed prior to government” (Spencer says the same thing), “and would exist if the formality of government was abolished. The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has in man, and all the parts of civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation prospers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common interest regulates their concerns, and forms their laws; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, society performs for itself almost everything which is ascribed to government.” (Rights of Man, Part 2. chap. 1.)

How clear in the mind of Thomas Paine was the distinction between society and government, and besides be made no pretensions to “the slightest smattering of sociology.” Hear this government maker still further: “Government is no further necessary than to supply the few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent; and instances are not wanting to show that *everything* which government can *usefully* add thereto has been performed by the common consent of society *without* government.”

“For upwards of two years from the commencement of the American war, and & longer period in several of the American states there were no established forms of government.”

“The instant formal government is abolished, society begins to act. A general association takes place, and common interest produces common security.” (Ibid.)

“Socialism and Nationalism,” says Mr. Wakeman, “which are in the line of evolution” (so are cobwebs), “have a future before them. They aim at emancipation from nature and monopoly; they are scientific.” It does not seem important to Mr. Wakeman to support his scientific statements with anything like proofs. He gives us his solemn word for it, and that he seems to think ought to be enough.

He says Mr. Pentecost has done nothing but harm, yet he does not show us any harm done.

“To him (Pentecost) there is but one factor the ego.” What evidence is offered in support of this libelous assertion? Is not Mr. Pentecost as greatly interested in the dissemination of truth as Mr. Wakeman? Because Mr. Pentecost advocates equal freedom for all, Mr. Wakeman cries out, “It is high treason against the organic life of society.” “Organic life”! chestnuts. “Society cannot exist without co-operation. It is like a great machine.” Here again he confounds society and government. Government is the machine for collecting taxes and doing a thousand despotic things. Mr. Spencer points out the way this machine works in legislation: “The history of one scheme is the history of all. First comes enactment, then probation, then failure; and after many alternate tinkering and abortive trials, arrives at length repeal, followed by the substitution of some fresh plan, doomed to run the same course, and share a like fate.”

Another writer whose name I cannot recall, says of legislative enactments: “They are bills which have been placed in the hands of their legislators to give some one man or body of men some advantage over his or their fellows, or through the instrumentality of the law to exonerate some man or body of men from some burden and pressure of general law, or to give some locality

the right or privilege to do or refrain from doing something which either the law forbids or requires to be done.”

Mr. Spencer informs us that governments are the product of violence. That they are a necessary evil, for the present, and that it is “a mistake to assume that government must necessarily last forever.” And yet “Socialism and Nationalism, which are in the line of evolution, have a future before them.” They promise to lead the people out of the wilderness by giving them more government, more taxes, more oppression, more political corruption. By this means society will be emancipated from monopoly! And this is what is called the scientific method of getting out of the woods! More government but less monopoly! Remember this is scientific and if you have “the slightest smattering of sociology” you will see it.

Hear him again: “Government of some kind or other is a necessity, and although I admit that in the current sense of the word it is in most instances nothing but tyranny, it was not so in the past, and will not be so in the future.” This is another section of science. Why did not our sociologist point out the governments that have not been tyrannous in the past? To go into details did not come within the scope of the master sociologist’s mind. Common people have to take his word for it, as they do much else of his oracular wisdom.

“The Anarchists were (are) but overgrown children; they needed a guardian, and he proposed to be one himself.” His confidence in assuming this role is riper than his capacity. He appealed to (Cæsar) Spencer and was turned out of court. Even his mother goose melody,

Each for All,
All for each;
From each his highest deed,
To each as he may need,

finds no resting-place in Spencer, who affirms that “The society exists for the benefit of its members; not the members for the benefit of society.” Exit humpty dumpty sociologist.

W. S. BELL.

Will it be Only a Change of Superstitions.

Judge Westbrook's prize for the Manual of Morals goes to Boston. I am not in it. In fact, realizing my incompetency, I did not compete and cannot have any of the sympathy that the committee sends out to the unsuccessful moral essayists.....

The Liberal public has a long time between now and the first, of September to speculate on what the new manual will contain, and to hope that when it appears it will not be open to the charge of teaching religion in the form of emotional morality. Freethinkers are religious to a certain extent, their religion having mainly to do with their relations toward one another and the balance of mankind. This is what is called morality when viewed emotionally. Scientifically it is economics; but the emotional view is so generally taken that I am afraid the Christian world will claim that in seeking to introduce this manual into the schools Secularists are merely trying to oust one sort of religion in order to substitute another which suits them better.

There is one thing on the subject of which the world is more bigoted, intolerant, and hypocritical than on the subject of theology, and that is the question of morality. It is rather worse to be 'a heretic in morals, like Heywood, than unorthodox in religion, like the rest of us. I have known quite a number of unpopular persons who repudiated the ethical standards set up by general and ignorant assent, and the one feature that distinguished them from the crowd was their remarkably circumspect conduct in precisely the direction in which they claimed the liberty to be otherwise. Perhaps they were afraid to tread the path they pointed out to others, or perhaps they had tried it and found it rough.—George E. Macdonald in "Freethought."

Mr. Pentecost Strikes Bottom.

Regarding a case of legal tyrannizing in sexual relations, Hugh O. Pentecost says:

Harry Gordon promised to marry Maggie Murphy, both of New York city. Then Maggie enjoyed with Harry that form of pleasure known as carnal knowledge. Then Harry refused to marry Maggie. Then Maggie had Harry arrested, and he is now in jail. It will be seen that Maggie trusted Harry and on the strength of her trust voluntarily enjoyed herself with him. Is it not fair to ask why the politicians should punish Harry for lying to Maggie? Did she not have the history of the ages to guide her in her conduct? If, in the light of all past experience in similar cases, Maggie chose to trust Harry, should she not be allowed to suffer the consequences of her own willing deeds? How else are women to learn how to take care of themselves?

On the Duty idea, in replying to a letter from Joseph Anthony, Mr. Pentecost makes the following sound utterances, with which all his others are not consistent:

...I would not seriously object to sweeping the streets or cleaning a sewer for an hour or so; and if it were something that I liked to do I could enjoy five or six hours' work a day; but drudgery, slavery, I hate, and ease and joy I like. And what keeps me in a constant state of rage is that men and women have to drudge till they drop into the grave, for food, clothes, and shelter, and mighty little of them, because monopolists, backed by the government, which in turn, is upheld by the toilers' senseless superstitions, rob them, and intelligent men like you preach the gospel of "work" and "ought" to them, and would have them believe that "ease and joy," the only things worth living for, are things to turn one's back on. You say I would be glad to do as I wish and not as I "ought." Pray whence comes this "ought"? It is not "man-made," you say, "but natural and inevitable." I deny the existence of any such ought. People should do as they please, and the only reason why we are not all wealthy and happy is because our rulers and our superstitions do not allow us to live so.

I know something of you through your writings for this and other publications, and I judge you to be the kind of man I like. The foregoing letter to me increased my liking for you; but if I understand your position, your whole philosophy of life, in my opinion, is wrong. You do not believe in any of the gods and you do not like the church, but you cling to the old priestly idea that it is wrong to take one's ease and have uninterrupted joy; and you seem to think that we should always be sacrificing our own desires for the good of other people—a "spirit of brotherhood" I presume you would call it. This doctrine of self-denial I hate; I regard it as one of the most injurious doctrines men have ever believed. I believe men will never become wealthy and happy until they become entirely [consistently] selfish, never sacrificing anything

unless they can increase their wealth and happiness by so doing. The only reason, I think, why men should abandon their vacant land and cease their other monopolies is because they would thereby increase their own happiness by removing the poverty, ignorance, and crime [and anti-frigid influence of the dispossessed] which make it impossible for any one to be happy. I believe even Jay Gould would be happier if there were no poor people in the world.

I am not a humanitarian, not a philanthropist. The only reason why I work for the cessation of poverty, cruelty, and arbitrary restrictions is because they hear directly on me, hindering me from doing What I wish to do, and because the sight and the knowledge of so much misery and slavery depresses and pains me so that I am constantly debating whether it is better to live and endure it or die and escape it. I know how happy life would be if men and women were free from poverty and rulers, and I am working in the hopes of enjoying a little of that happiness. And in spite of all the exceptions which may be taken to this philosophy of selfishness, I am entirely sure that everybody lives by it as necessarily as that they breathe. I believe that no one ever voluntarily does anything except because he thinks it will promote his own happiness.

Managerial Experience.

This number closes the most eventful year of EGOISM's existence. It has been a year full of surprises and fleas as well as some pleasant disappointments for the publishers. They have had the satisfaction of seeing some of the most popular disturbers of bioplasmic habit indorse the central principle of their publication, while still others propagated it as original with themselves. They have heard from able editors the inquiry, "What is it printed for?" The comprehensible answer to such is, "Fifty cents a year." The publishers have seen Altruists become subjectively exultant over its unanswerable defense of selfy motives, and then turn purple with anger when shown the unavoidable equal freedom that such universally distributed resistance must result in without giving to any one credit for being gratuitously good. Another surprise lying truthfully concealed in the folds of impending experience was found in that almost all the support received came from persons they had never before heard of. Comparatively few of the readers of their former publication, "Equity," took appreciatingly to the new idea. The most of them so far have been indifferent and allowed the expiration of their respective credits on "Equity" to end their relations with EGOISM, thus demonstrating that a little gushing emotionalism and sentimental protest constitutes the length of their mental lariat. It is obvious that the majority of innovators are a little too umbilically religious to appreciate a consistent generalization from protruding facts, and too impulsive to conform to the conventionalities of the theological domination whose ideals they adore.

While most of our radical contemporaries have shown unmistakable evidence of constantly reading the paper, some of them have failed to publicly acknowledge its existence. "Fair Play" on receipt of the prospectus heartily announced its coming, and afterward copied from and complimented it, which in addition to sentimental satisfaction has put clear cash into our five-cent sheepskin purse.

"Freethought" announced its appearance with a lavish compliment by describing it as being like "Liberty," and later copied from it. To George Macdonald, former editor and manager of that paper, we owe obligations for constant favors. He has helped us by every turn in his reach, and is the Egoistic prize of which our staff is proudest.

"Liberty" noted along with that of others, EGOISM's arrival, and then waited patiently for five months for something it could approve. Finally Victor Yarros discovered some sentences and parts of sentences which in Mr. Tucker's absence he quoted, and upon which he based a strong two-line indorsement followed by seven lines of much needed advice. Thus "Liberty," EGOISM's reluctant and unenthusiastic parent, has not lost its reputation for impartial judgment by philo-progenitive gushing over the accident of an unguarded moment, but has thereby retained the brat's confidence with no loss save a clam's smile from a pulpy hopeful.

The Denver "Individualist," "Lucifer," "Farm View," and the Hastings (Mich.) "Plaindealer" have all quoted from these columns, and the "Plaindealer" has advised its patrons to try the experiment of sending us four-hits for a year's subscription. If its publisher's influence with his readers is no

greater than ours is with our patrons, we shall have to credit him only with a safely-exercised good will.

Although the editor of the "Twentieth Century" noted in eulogistic words the reappearance of "Fair Play," and has occasionally, though inconsistently and smatteringly appropriated the Egoistic idea, he failed to more than incidentally refer to EGOISM. He possibly did not think about it, for he has no opinion that he does not confide to the public. This he must accomplish by doing the clergyman's act of drawing the blind when a gleaming argument forecasts an undesired conclusion. Popular Mr. Pentecost, he plants his garden with plucked violets, which will wither under the glow of growing analysis.

We have witnessed that some of our friends who have voluntarily declared our journal to be the most consistent and refreshing one published, contribute ten times as much to conservative and prosperous papers, while a man who admitted his preference for another journal made us the only present we have received. We have also experienced our own mother and mother-in-law combined, as a diligent canvasser for the "Twentieth Century" while she has not even complimented our efforts. I believe this to be due to her being a reformer such as described by Tak Kak in the preceding number of EGOISM. I congratulate her, however, on manifesting no other trait—characteristic of mothers-in-law. She evidently does not appreciate the qualifying generalizations that differentiate this paper from the "Twentieth Century." A reputable Anarchist living in its own city refuses to renew his subscription for our paper, while others who do take it seem indifferent, and from sample copies sent to the rest not a response comes. Alleged radicals and reformers warm all about it and are not hostile, but evidently feel no need of a paper whose manager wears a blue flannel shirt and a loan expression. There is practically no support for the paper on the Pacific coast. Nearly all orders come from east of the Rockies.

"Fair Play" announces that its publication now costs two dollars against only one received, and that its list must be doubled in the following thirty days if its subscribers want it to continue. Its condition, however, is a bonanza compared with that of EGOISM. Each subscriber gets for fifty cents what costs us just four dollars and a half to furnish, counting no time for editing, mailing, and necessary correspondence. No other paper in the country offers such inducement to a greedy public. This must be stopped in some way or every speculator in the United States will be into it. It beats government bonds, gold mines, and California real estate for plunder. It could be remedied by our friends rustling up six or seven hundred more subscribers for us or by those we now have, paying in the other four dollars. Otherwise we would have to put the subscription price up to five dollars to prevent the property of the country from drifting through this speculation into the hands of the few—who subscribe for EGOISM.

We have tried very hard to make the paper worth what it costs us. We have teased all our philosophical friends for articles, and have ourselves written editorials so deeply philosophical that we could not understand them after they were printed. We have emphasized in the most pointed language at our command the crushing evil of monopolies and the superstitions fanaticism of sacrifice, only to find in the end that we have ourselves been both maintaining a sacrifice and creating such an opportunity for speculation as has not before existed. But we are not disheartened; the paper has escaped for a whole year any scorching criticism from "Liberty," and besides has been congratulated by nearly all the high privates in the Anarchistic skirmish line, as well as by many of the growing reserve force. People are telling their friends of it and it is constantly picking up new subscribers in the East and North. If this is kept up and the old once

promptly renew, we will be on a paying basis in less than five years, which is saying a great deal for a journal that panders so little.

It is great fun to run a paper about a year. Everyone should try it. It quickens the faculties and enlivens the bowels. It also puts you in close sympathy with those who can remain quiet with such great difficulty that they find it easier to labor hard and spend all they make in saying their say. If you can control your crowing and cackling instinct readily enough, it will be a saving of money to print a small pamphlet or make an almanac every year containing your opinions upon the pages usually occupied by other “chestnuts.” You might procure patent medicine and novelty advertisements to help pay the printing expenses. The calendar at least will be useful to your friends, to whom you must of course send it prepaid. You need not necessarily have second-class postal rates, as that necessitates issuing at least four times a year, and it is a great deal of trouble to rearrange the same old ideas in a new form so often; it will be cheaper to pay third-class rates and spend the remainder of the time thus saved from writing and printing, in reading your exchange almanacs and pamphlets. Nothing else could be so productive of satisfaction and pamphlets. The comparison of your this year’s ideas with last year’s thought and its presentation will impel you surprisingly toward consistency and starvation. But I wander—what this has to do with the actual experience I meant to relate.

THE MANAGER.

EGOISM'S PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE.

EGOISM's purpose is the improvement of social existence through intelligent self-interest. It finds that whatever we have of equal conditions and mutual advantage is due to a prevalence of this principle corresponding with the degree and universality of individual resistance to encroachment.

Reflection will satisfy all who are desirous of being guided in their conclusions by fact, that as organization itself is a process of absorbing every material useful to its purpose, with no limit save that of outside resistance, so must the very fact of its being a separately organized entity make it impossible for it to act with ultimate reference to anything but itself. Observation will show that this holds good throughout the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and that whatever of equality exists among members of a species or between different species has its source and degree in the resisting capacity, of whatever kind, which such member or species can exert against the encroachment of other members or species. The human animal is no exception to this rule. True, its greater complexity has developed the expedient of sometimes performing acts with beneficial results to others, but this is at last analysis only resistance, because it is the only means of resisting the withholding by others from such actor's welfare that which is more desirable than that with which he parts. If, then, (the self-projecting faculty of mankind is such that it will in addition to the direct resistance common to the less complex animals, diplomatically exercise present sacrifice to further extend self, and it being a fact that equality depends upon equal resistance, diplomatic or otherwise, what are its chances in an absence of enlightenment in which the individuals of the majority so far from *intelligently* using this resisting power in their own behalf, do not even believe that they should do so? The result of a general conception so chaotic, would naturally be what we find: the generalization from the practical expediency of certain consideration for others, crystallized through the impulse of blind selfishness into a mysterious and oppressive obligation, credit for the observance of which gratifies the self-projecting faculty of the simple, while the more shrewd evade its exactions, and at every step from the manipulation of the general delusions of religious and political authority to the association of sexes and children at play, project themselves by exchanging this mythical credit for the real comforts and luxuries of the occasion, which the others produce. Thus in addition to the natural disadvantage of unequal capacity, the weaker are deprived through a superstition, of the use of such capacity as they have, as may be seen in their groping blindness all about us.

To secure and maintain equal conditions then, requires a rational understanding of the real object of life as indicated by the facts of its expression. It is plain that the world of humanity is made up of individuals absolutely separate; that life is to this humanity nothing save as it is something to one of these; that one of these can be nothing to another except as he detracts from or adds to his happiness; that on this is based the idea of social expediency; that the resistance of each of these individuals would determine what is socially expedient; that approximately equal resistance makes it equality, and on such continued and a universal resistance depends equality. This can leave no room for any sane action toward others but that of the policy promoting most

the happiness of the acting Ego. Therefore EGOISM insists that the attainment of equal freedom depends upon a course of conduct-replacing the idea of “duty to others” with *expediency* toward others; upon a recognition of the fact that self-pleasure must be the final motive of any act; thus developing a principle for a basis of action about which there can be no misunderstanding, and which will place every person squarely on the merit of his or her probable interests, divested of the opportunity to deceive through pretension, as under the dominance of altruistic idealism. It will maintain that what is generally recognized as morality is nothing other than the expediency deduced from conflicting interests under competition; that it is a policy which, through the hereditary influence of ancestral experience, confirmed by personal experience, is found to pay better than any other known policy; that the belief that it is something other than a policy—a fixed and eternal obligation, outside of and superior to man’s recognized interests, and may not be changed as utility indicates, makes it a superstition in effect like any other superstition which causes its adherent-s to crystallize the expediency adopted by one period into positive regulations for another in which it has no utility, but becomes tyrannical laws and customs in the name of which persecution is justified, as in the fanaticism of any fixed idea.

Another part of its purpose is to help dispel the “Political Authority” superstition and develop a public sentiment which would replace State interference with the protection for person and property which the competition of protecting associations would afford. Then the State’s fanatical tyranny and industry crushing privilege would torture the nerves of poverty-stricken old age or pinch tender youth no more. The most disastrous interference of this monster superstition is its prohibition of the issuing of exchange medium on the ample security of all kinds of property, which at once would abolish speculative interest and practically set all idle hands at productive labor at wages ever nearing the whole product until it should be reached. The next interference is by paper titles to vacant land instead of the just and reasonable one of occupancy and use, which with the employment that free money would give, would furnish all with comfortable homes in a short time, and thereafter even with luxuries from like exertion. Following this is its patent privilege, customs robbery, protective tariff, barbarous decrees in social and sexual affairs; its brutal policy of revenge, instead of restitution, in criminal offenses, and finally its supreme power to violate the individual, and its total irresponsibility.

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